

THE
LAND OF THE MOA





Sketches
by
G. S.

A Poem
by

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∞ The Land of the Moa ∞



Surrounded by the jealous Southern waves,
A happy Island sleeps upon the sea:
The blue Pacific's arm is round her thrown,
Guarding her Ocean Child!
O Maoriland! Nature's last gift to man—
Blessed by the viewless Powers—alone—unknown—
Waked by Dawn's golden lance—hush'd with Night's dews,
And guardianed by wandering airs of heaven;
Your listening forests hearing wild sea winds,
Singing a song caught from the Infinite:
Your lonely mountains lifting snowy arms
In silent prayer for all they sentinel—
Green solitudes of shade—wide wind blown plain—
Wild leaping foam sprays—amethystine glooms—
Tumultuous waters hurrying to the sea,—
And dreaming lakes embosomed in deep fern!

[Continued on page 3 of cover.]



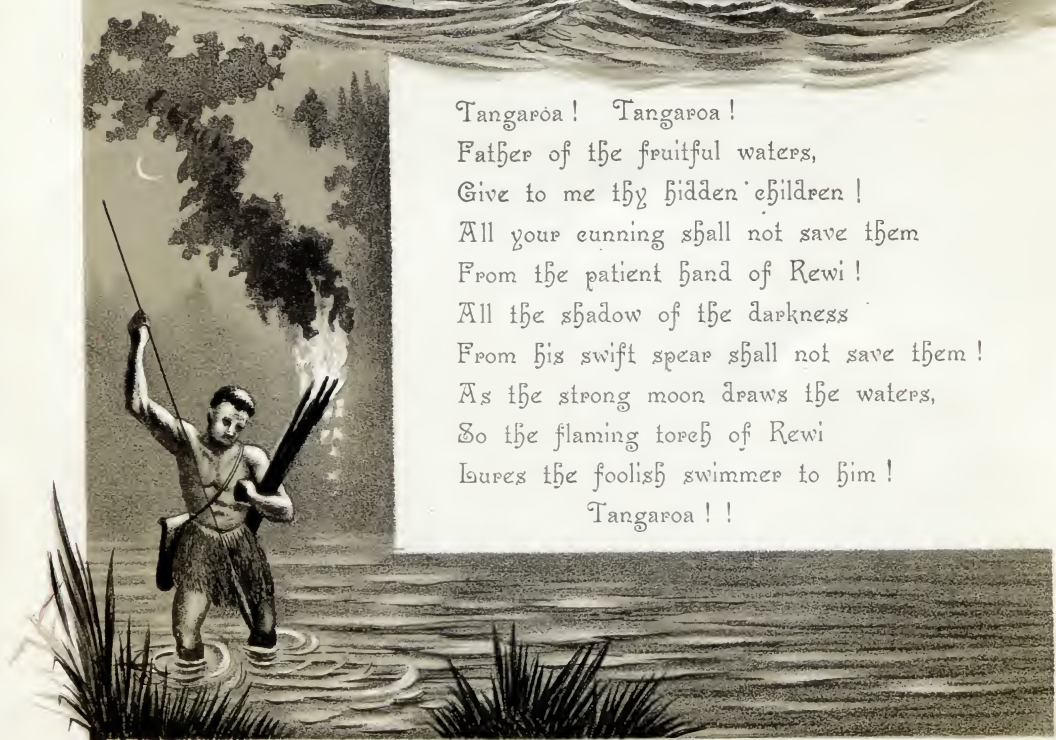


Nana ka toremi a Ra nui ! The fierce Sea drinks Day's blood.
 He oho ata ! Ra's grave is in the waves,
 And wings of Darkness sweep the shadowed land !
 Night's arm is round us !—rest—ye tired ones—rest—
 And Sleep, thou silent comforter, draw near !
 Come forth ye braves ! From Kangi's bosom leap
 In shining guard o'er all who slumber here !





Tangaroa ! Tangaroa !
Father of the fruitful waters,
Give to me thy hidden children !
All your cunning shall not save them
From the patient hand of Rewi !
All the shadow of the darkness
From his swift spear shall not save them !
As the strong moon draws the waters,
So the flaming torch of Rewi
Lures the foolish swimmer to him !
Tangaroa ! !



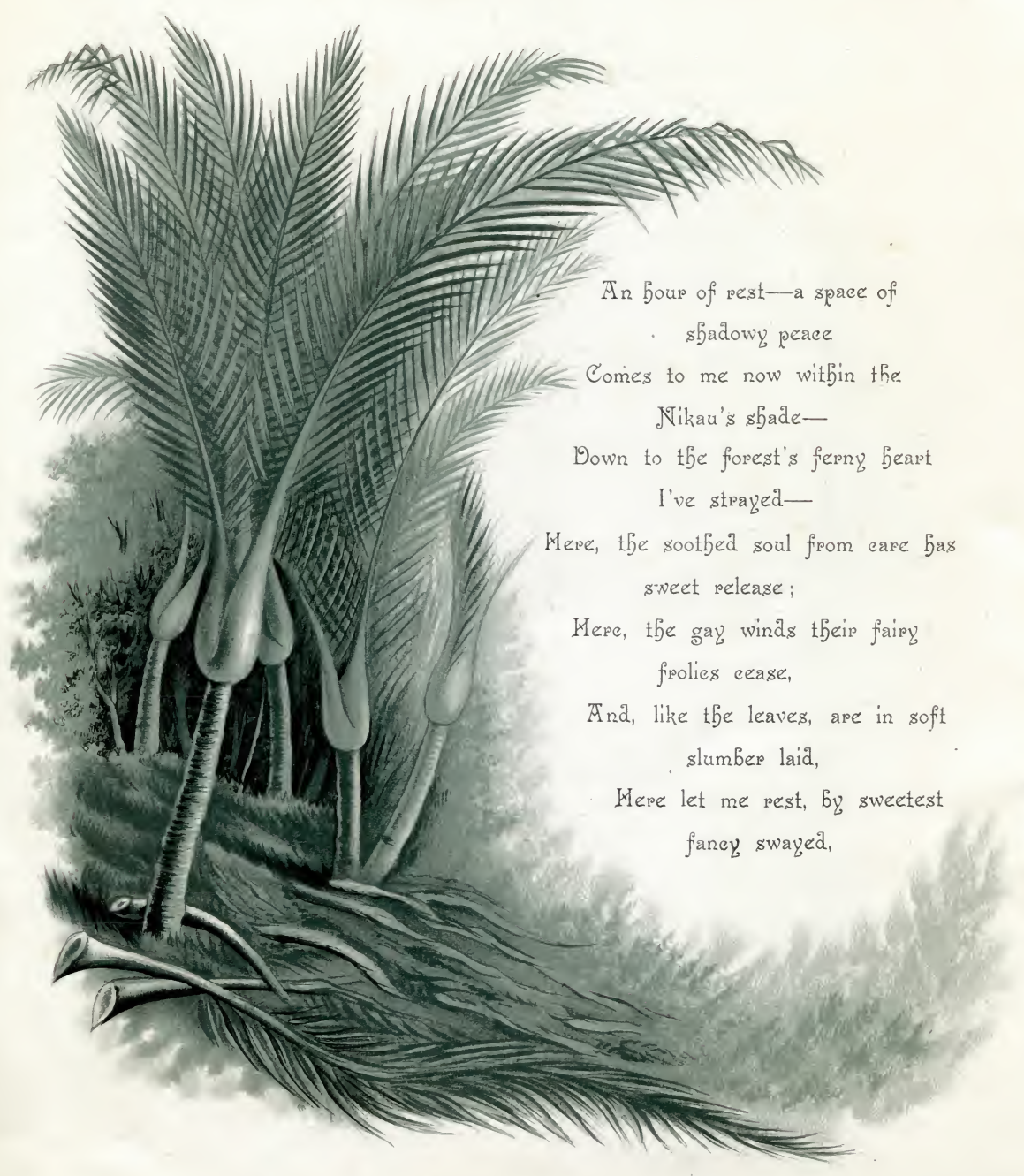


Mau! I hear Tu's voice fierce calling—
 "Mau! Why sleep the Chiefs of Taupo?
 "Why, my strong sons, O so idle?
 "Westward! Southward! Follow! Follow!
 "On the blood-red track I lead you!
 "As the hawk swoops on the pigeon—
 "As the Sun's hand smites the shadows—
 "As the Sun's blood dyes the waters,—
 "So the spears of Tu shall redden
 "In the life-stream of the fallen!"

Ka—i—ta!

Mau! Mau! Westward! Mau! Mau! Southward!
 Ka riri te mata O Tu!





An hour of rest—a space of
 shadowy peace
Comes to me now within the
 Nikau's shade—
Down to the forest's ferny heart
 I've strayed—
Here, the soothed soul from care has
 sweet release ;
Here, the gay winds their fairy
 frolics cease,
And, like the leaves, are in soft
 slumber laid,
Here let me rest, by sweetest
 fancy swayed,

Letting thought drift like yon cloud's .

pearly fleece !

Oh ! like the wild bee lured

to flowery dell,

Here will I lie where earth's by

beauty crowned !

The myriad lives whieh in the

forest dwell,

Salute the ear with faintly mur-

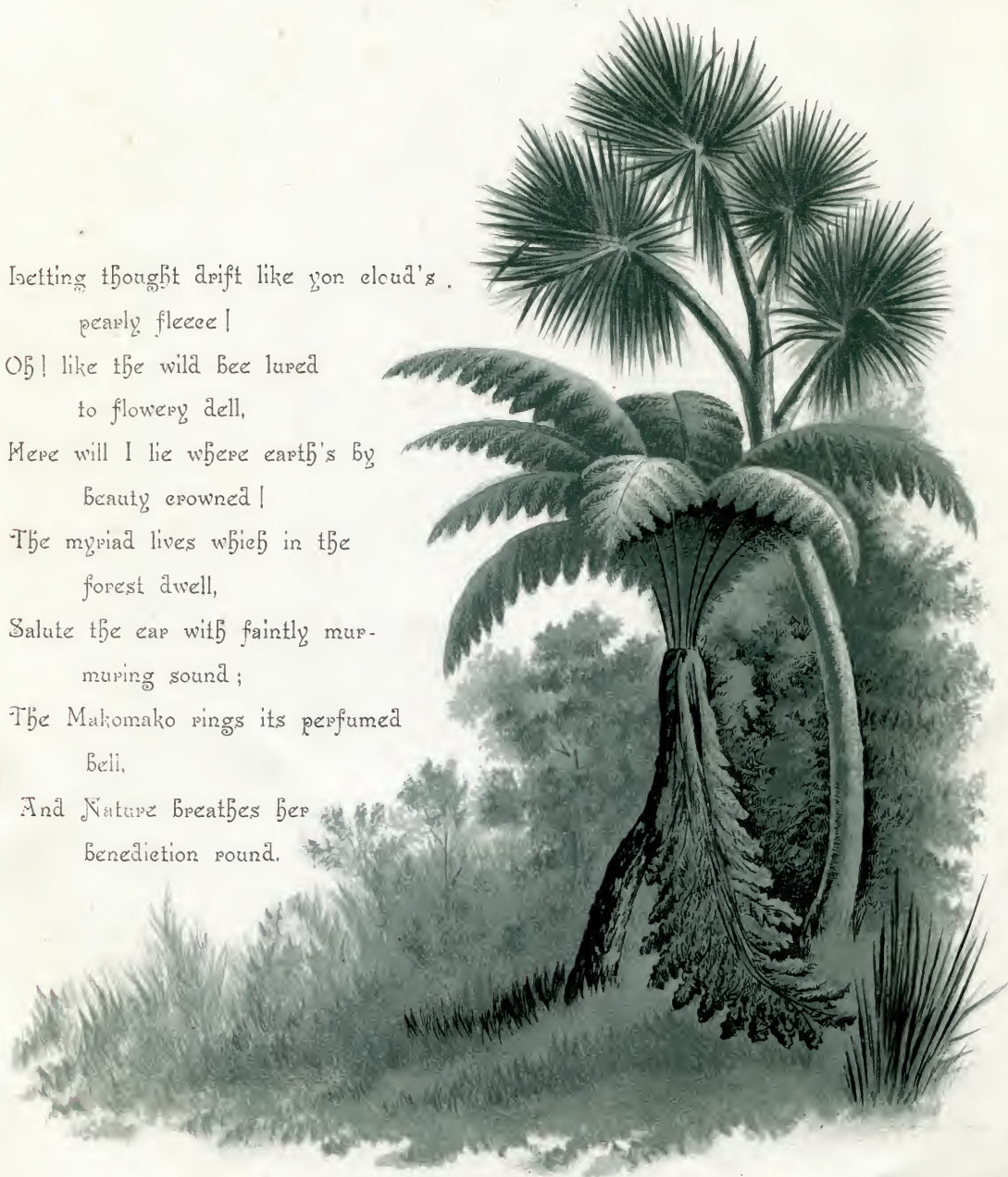
muring sound ;

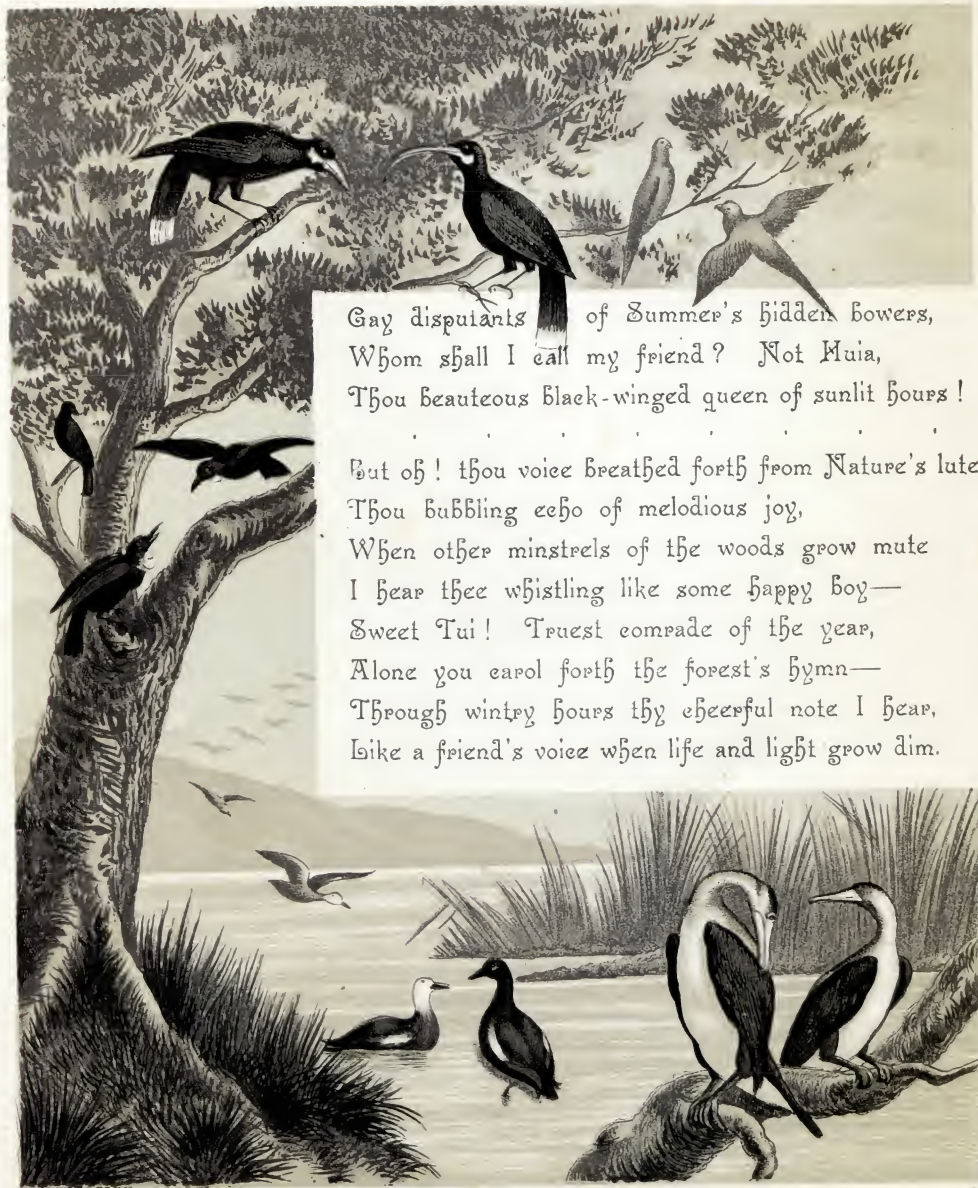
The Makomako rings its perfumed

bell,

And Nature breathes her

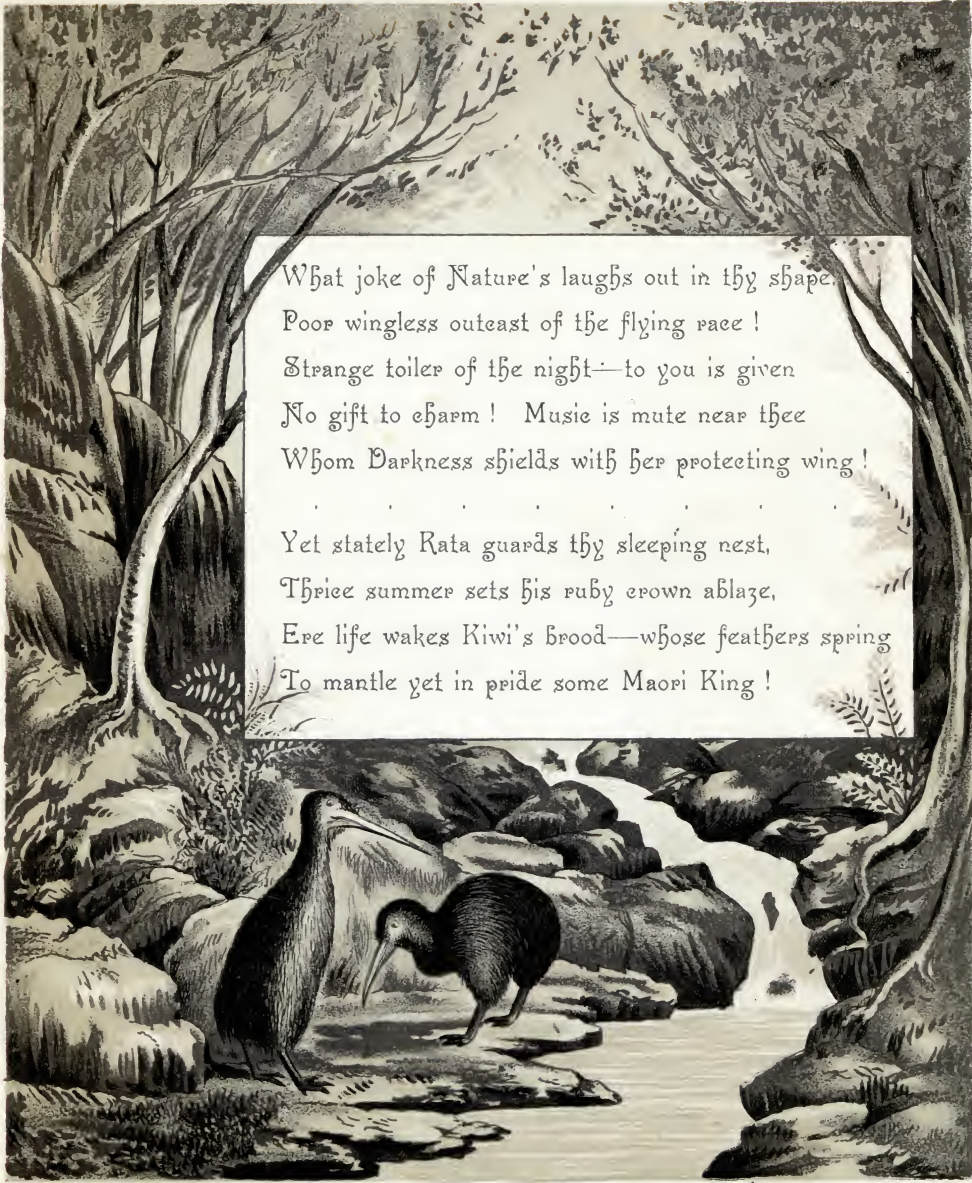
benediction round.





Gay disputants of Summer's hidden bowers,
Whom shall I call my friend? Not Maia,
Thou beauteous black-winged queen of sunlit hours!

But oh! thou voice breathed forth from Nature's lute!
Thou bubbling echo of melodious joy,
When other minstrels of the woods grow mute
I hear thee whistling like some happy boy—
Sweet Tui! Truest comrade of the year,
Alone you carol forth the forest's hymn—
Through wintry hours thy cheerful note I hear,
Like a friend's voice when life and light grow dim.




What joke of Nature's laughs out in thy shape,
Poor wingless outcast of the flying race !
Strange toiler of the night—to you is given
No gift to charm ! Music is mute near thee
Whom Darkness shields with her protecting wing !

Yet stately Rata guards thy sleeping nest,
Thrice summer sets his ruby crown ablaze,
Ere life wakes Kiwi's brood—whose feathers spring
To mantle yet in pride some Maori King !

Mysterious spirit of the misty lake !
The white winged solitary Crane flits by
Where Whiro's thieving bird doth echo wake,
Where lonely bittern thrice lifts plaintive cry !
Blue coated thief—Pukeko ! Bittern sly,
Oh not for you doth fancy thus awake,
But yonder pale winged Spirit of the night
I may not view again with mortal sight.

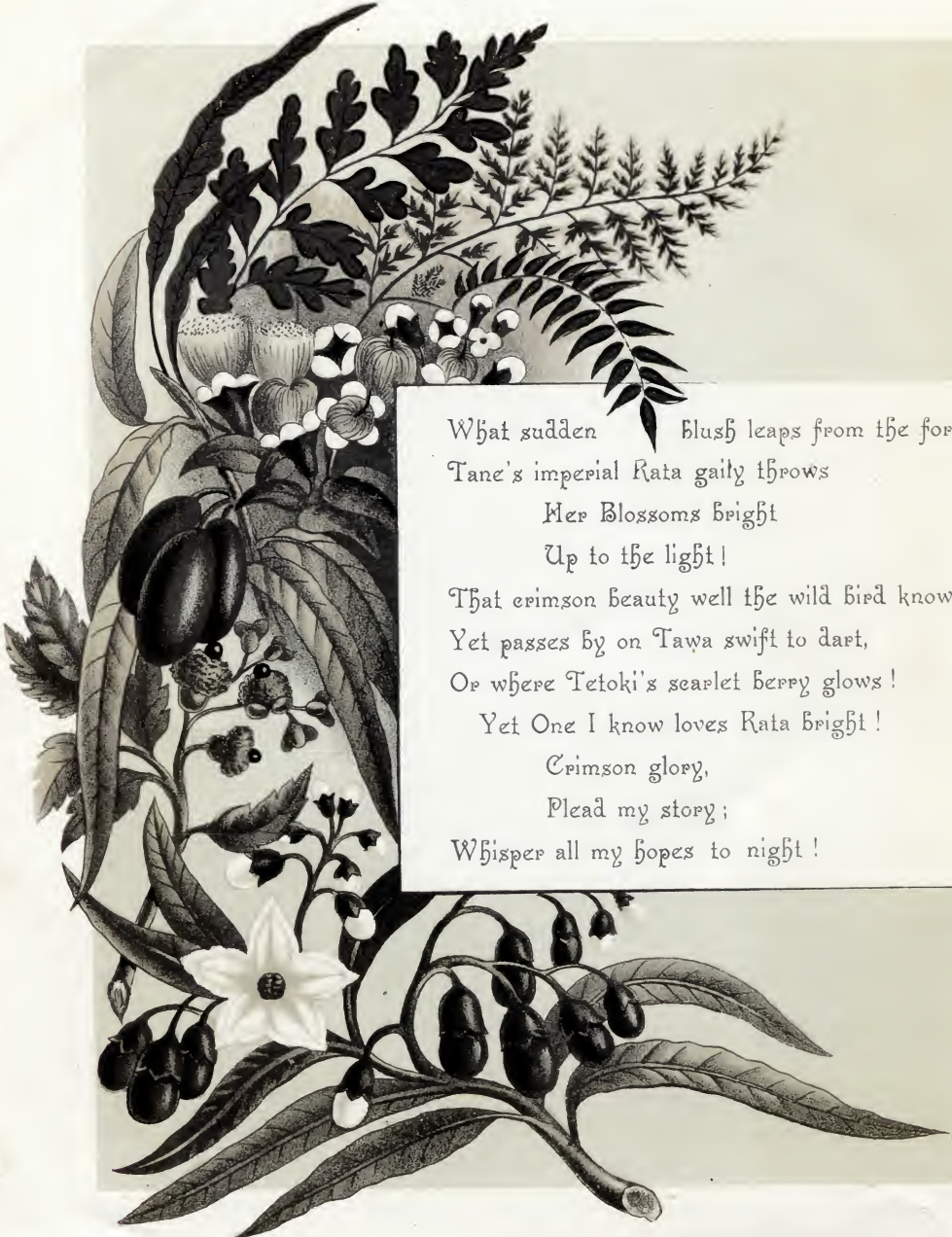




Well met ! comrade spirits of Spring,
Once more let the merrie woods ring,
With a million sweet notes from our own
laughing throats,
As we welcome each friend on the wing.

Gay rovers are we, never sighing
To see Summer beauties adying ;
Soon over the Sea like spirits set free,
In quest of new loves we are flying.

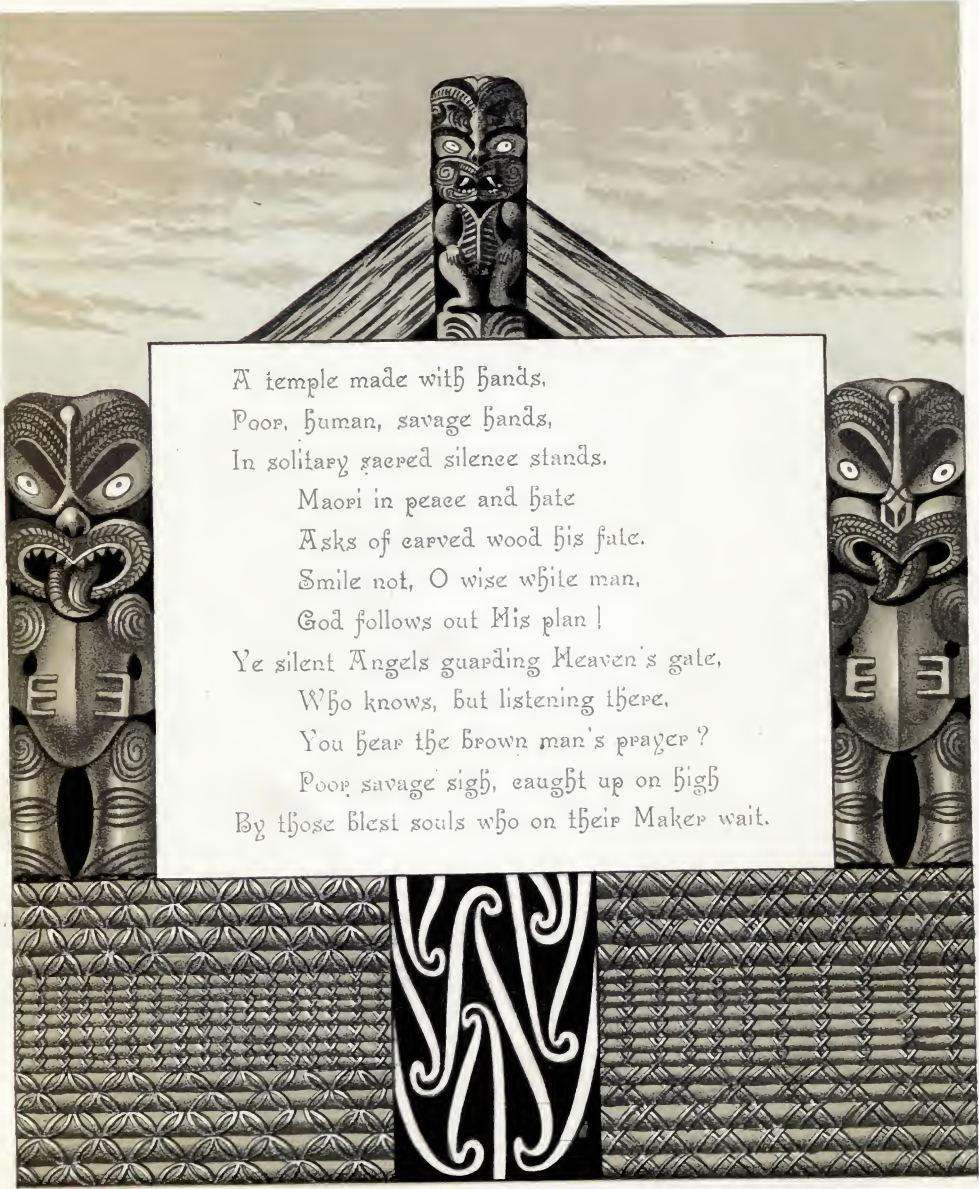
King Fisher ! Come—drink to fine weather !
Then Oh ! we'll be merry together !
Loud—loud let us sing our old anthem to Spring,
Come ! a chorus of friends in full feather !



What sudden blush leaps from the forest's heart?
Tane's imperial Rata gaily throws
Her Blossoms bright
Up to the light!


That crimson beauty well the wild bird knows,
Yet passes by on Tawa swift to dart,
Or where Tetoki's scarlet berry glows!
Yet One I know loves Rata bright!

Crimson glory,
Plead my story;
Whisper all my hopes to night!





A temple made with hands,
Poor, human, savage hands,
In solitary sacred silence stands.

Maori in peace and hate
Asks of carved wood his fate.
Smile not, O wise white man,
God follows out His plan !
Ye silent Angels guarding Heaven's gate,
Who knows, but listening there,
You hear the brown man's prayer ?
Poor savage sigh, caught up on high
By those blest souls who on their Maker wait.



Frail Clematis ! whose dewy starry crown
Smiled to the morning sky,
The jealous hand that tore you rudely down
Leaves you to die !

Fair forest-child ! I echo back the sigh
Breathes from thy dying charms,
'Twere well—unknown to live—unseen to die
In Nature's arms !



O Maoriland ! The white man breaks thy rest ;
Cries, " Dreamer, Wake ! Awake, and tell thy past !"
Vain cry ! Wise Nature guards her secret tombs,
Lays warning finger on her silent lip :
Buries the Past—hoodwinks the present—shields
The coming future from too curious gaze,
Throws down her gauntlet to the wondering sage,
Who bends his glance upon those whitening bones,
As yet unerushed beneath Time's hurrying step,
Unhidden yet beneath Oblivion's dust !
So meekly eloquent of perished life,
In harmony with towering Pine and Palm !
Mysterious Moa ! Mighty Bird which stalked
These shadowy solitudes ! Who seeks thee now
Finds but a sepulchre ! Nature calls home
This fallen soldier on Creation's march !
The lowly shall endure—the proud be slain ;
Each humble forest minstrel chants its strain,
While the lost King of Birds is but a name !

